**Honors Cultural Studies**

My name is Ms. Wilson, and I will be your child’s Cultural Studies teacher for the 2011-2012 school year. This is my sixth year at Unionville High School and I am excited for a productive school year. Please feel free to contact me at [lwilson@ucfsd.org](mailto:lwilson@ucfsd.org).

This is a foundation course in cultures organized by region: Middle East, Africa, China, Japan, India, and Latin America. Each region is divided into six areas: Geography, History, Social Relationships, Religion and Philosophy, Economics and Government, and the Arts and Sciences. Included is an introductory unit on terminology of culture. The United Nations is studied as a unit and as it relates to each region studied in the course. Current events pertaining to the areas studied are emphasized throughout the year.

Cultural Studies Honors is a rigorous course requiring students to perform research, analyze data, work independently as well as in group situations and study cultures at a greater depth than their academic counterparts. Students will be expected to read their textbook independently and institute the method of studying the material, which best suits their learning style. Classroom time will largely be spent supplementing the textbook with research, discussions and current events.

A typical marking period grade will be reached through the following assessments:

1. **Notebooks:** Each student will be expected to have a **three ring binder** in which to keep all cultural studies work. Organization is a key to success. I expect, in an organized manner, students to keep all chapter outlines, notes, handouts, and current events.
2. **Homework:** Students will receive daily homework assignments. Active readings are expected to be completed for homework. Students will be expected to read the chapters and create their own (no copying) **active reading**. There will be at least 10 random homework checks per marking period counting for 10 points each. Homework is expected to be complete on time, in order to be prepared for class discussion. No late homework will be accepted for points.
3. **Maps:** One map will be completed for each region studied. There will be a map exam for each region, which will include both a political and physical map.
4. **Current Events:** Current events are a vital element of this course. We will discuss current events on a daily basis. Students will be required to locate, summarize, and react to current event articles in written and/or oral exercises. I recommend that your child read newspaper and magazine articles regularly concerning world events as well as watching world news programs on television whenever possible.
5. **Unit Exams:** Students will be tested after the completion of each unit. Test may consist of multiple choice, matching, maps, charts, true/false, images, short answer and essay questions. The chapter outlines will serve as a study guide for the students for the unit exams, mid-term and final.
6. **Projects/Papers:** Generally one project or paper will be assigned per marking period. These may be in the form of individual or group assignments. Some class time will be provided. We will be working on document based questions (DBQs) in order to prepare for higher levels of study.
7. **Journals:** Students will be asked to respond to something (pertaining to the topic we are discussing) in their journal. Students will be expected to write for a specific amount of time and complete at least a page. Students will keep the journal in the classroom. Three random journal entries will be graded; therefore students are expected to put forth effort in each entry.
8. **Late Policy:** For ALL assignments, unless noted otherwise: each day an assignment is late one letter grade (10%) will be taken off of the final grade of the assignment.

* **Textbook Policy:** Each student will receive a textbook; I will record the number and the student will record the number on the portion of this paper that you turn back into me. The student will be expected to keep track of the textbook and maintain its condition for the school year. All textbooks will be collected the day of the final exam. As per the school district’s policy NO TEXTBOOK NO FINAL EXAM. Students will be expected to replace a lost textbook.
* **Hall/Bathroom Passes:** Students will receive four bathroom passes per marking period. In order to gain an understanding of the curriculum it is essential students be in class! Each pass not used each marking period is equal to one extra credit point.
* **Videos:** Many video (movie and documentary) clips and/or full length videos will be used to enhance the students understanding of various cultural characteristics. Due to the fact that we cover a variety of cultures that are very different from our own it is extremely important that students receive a visual and auditory example of the cultures. I strongly encourage you to sign permission for your child to view the various videos! Please contact me with specific questions.
* **Plagiarism:** Students are expected to adhere to the school district’s policy on plagiarism for all assignments. According to the district’s policy if a student plagiarizes an assignment, the first offense: zero for the assignment and a write up; second offense: failure of the course.
* **SAM:** All assessments will be graded and returned in a timely fashion, and all grades will be posted on the SAM website for both student and parent access.

We will study the following this year:

**First Marking Period Third Marking Period**

Cultural Terms Africa

Middle East South Asia

**Second Marking Period Fourth Marking Period**

Latin America East Asia

United Nations

In order to provide a productive learning environment for all students it is essential that several basic classroom rules be followed.

1. Respect
   1. The teacher/substitute
   2. Your peers
   3. Yourself
2. Follow all directions
3. Be prepared to learn
   1. The COVERED text will be required daily

After you have read this letter of introduction, please sign below and return. I am looking forward to an enjoyable and productive year with your child and will be looking forward to seeing you at Back-to-School-Night.

Ms. Lindsay Wilson

**Detach and return this portion only!**

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My child and I have read and understand the expectations set forth in the syllabus for Ms. Wilson’s Honors Cultural Studies course.

\_\_\_\_ I give permission for my child to watch the videos used for cultural enhancement.

\_\_\_\_ I DO NOT give permission for my child to watch the videos used for cultural enhancement. Ms. Wilson will contact any parent who chooses this option at the following phone number or email address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Textbook number \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and Condition \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Class Period \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_